

the American people, can be prepared to meet this challenge.

Now, no one will ever find every embedded microchip, every line of code that needs to be rewritten. But if companies, agencies, and organizations are ready, if they understand the threat and have backup plans, then we will meet this challenge.

The millennium bug is a vivid and powerful reminder of the ways that we are growing ever more independent as we rise to the challenges of this new era. When our Founding Fathers urged us to form a more perfect Union, I don't think they had this in mind, but they might be quite pleased. The powerful forces of change that have created unimagined abundance also bear within them, as is consistent with human nature, the possibilities of new and unexpected challenges.

But if we act properly, we won't look back on this as a headache, sort of the last failed challenge of the 20th century. It will be the first challenge of the 21st century successfully met. That is the American way, and together we can do it.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:13 a.m. at the National Academy of Sciences. In his remarks, he referred to Bruce Alberts, president, National Academy of Sciences; and Stephen M. Wolf, chairman and chief executive officer, US Airways Group, Inc.

Statement on the Departments of Labor and Health and Human Services Appropriations Legislation

July 14, 1998

Making strategic investments in our people, especially our children, has been a critical component of my economic strategy from the start. Last year we worked together on a bipartisan basis to open the doors of college, expanding Pell grants and creating \$1,500 HOPE scholarships to advance the critical goal of making college universally available. This year I have proposed strategic investments to improve and reform K-12 education by putting standards, accountability, and choice back into our public schools. My agenda reduces class size, modernizes

schools, invests in technology, and puts an end to social promotion. These initiatives would help ensure that every 8-year-old can read, every 14-year-old can sign onto the Internet, and every 18-year-old can be ready for college.

That is why I am deeply concerned with the Labor/HHS appropriations bill that Congress is considering today. This legislation denies essential educational opportunities to young people across the country and important training and job opportunities for all Americans.

On balance, this bill fails to provide young Americans with the schooling and training that will be essential to their success as working adults and to our success as a nation. The bill is fundamentally flawed. Overall, it cuts \$2 billion from our request for education investment, short-changing initiatives on education reform, on raising educational achievement for our children, and on providing focused help for students who need it most. In addition, the bill fails to fund my childcare initiatives, eliminates current job training and other programs for low-income Americans, and has many other problems as well.

By turning their backs on America's young in this bill, the House Republicans are taking a step backward. I urge the committee to provide the funds necessary for this bill to move America into the future, not backward. This bill shortchanges investments in education, and if it were sent to me in its current form, I would have no choice but to veto it.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on Federal Advisory Committees

July 14, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

As provided by the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), as amended (Public Law 92-463; 5 U.S.C. App. 2, 6(c)), I am submitting the *Twenty-sixth Annual Report on Federal Advisory Committees*, covering fiscal year 1997.

Consistent with my commitment to create a more responsive government, the executive

branch continues to implement my policy of maintaining the number of advisory committees within the ceiling of 534 required by Executive Order 12838 of February 10, 1993. As a result, the number of discretionary advisory committees (established under general congressional authorizations) was held to 467, or 42 percent fewer than those 801 committees in existence at the beginning of my Administration.

Through the advisory committee planning process required by Executive Order 12838, the total number of advisory committees specifically mandated by statute has declined. The 391 such groups supported at the end of fiscal year 1997 represents a 4 percent decrease over the 407 in existence at the end of fiscal year 1996. Compared to the 439 advisory committees mandated by statute at the beginning of my Administration, the net total for fiscal year 1997 reflects an 11 percent decrease since 1993.

Furthermore, my Administration will assure that the total estimated costs to fund these groups in fiscal year 1998, or \$43.8 million, are dedicated to support the highest priority public involvement efforts. We will continue to work with the Congress to assure that all advisory committees that are required by statute are regularly reviewed through the congressional reauthorization process and that any such new committees proposed through legislation are closely linked to national interests.

Combined savings achieved through actions taken by the executive branch to eliminate unneeded advisory committees during fiscal year 1997 were \$2.7 million, including \$545,000 saved through the termination of five advisory committees established under Presidential authority.

During fiscal year 1997, my Administration successfully worked with the Congress to clarify further the applicability of FACA to committees sponsored by the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) and the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA). This initiative resulted in the enactment of the Federal Advisory Committee Act Amendments of 1997 (Public Law 105-153), which I signed into law on December 17, 1997. The Act provides for new and important means for the public and other inter-

ested stakeholders to participate in activities undertaken by committees established by the Academies in support of executive branch decisionmaking processes.

As FACA enters its second quarter-century during fiscal year 1998, it is appropriate for both the Congress and my Administration to continue examining opportunities for strengthening the Act's role in encouraging and promoting public participation. Accordingly, I am asking the Administrator of General Services to prepare a legislative proposal for my consideration that addresses an overall policy framework for leveraging the public's role in Federal decisionmaking through a wide variety of mechanisms, including advisory committees.

By jointly pursuing this goal, we can fortify what has been a uniquely American approach toward collaboration. As so aptly noted by Alexis de Tocqueville in *Democracy in America* (1835), "In democratic countries knowledge of how to combine is the mother of all other forms of knowledge; on its progress depends that of all the others." This observation strongly resonates at this moment in our history as we seek to combine policy opportunities with advances in collaboration made possible by new technologies, and an increased desire of the Nation's citizens to make meaningful contributions to their individual communities and their country.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
July 14, 1998.

**Message to the Congress
Transmitting the Comprehensive
National Energy Strategy**
July 14, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit the Comprehensive National Energy Strategy (Strategy) to the Congress. This report required by section 801 of the Department of Energy Organization Act (Public Law 95-91; 42 U.S.C. 7321(b)), highlights our national energy policy. It contains specific objectives and plans for meeting five essential, common sense goals enumerated in the accompanying message from Secretary Peña.